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UNH Announces Appointment of New Hayes Chair in Humanities

By [Erika Mantz](#)

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UNH News Bureau

March 11, 2002

DURHAM, N.H. , The University of New Hampshire's Center for the Humanities has appointed W. Jeffrey Bolster, associate professor of history, the next James H. Hayes and Claire Short Hayes Chair in the Humanities.

Bolster will assume the chair in July, when David Watters' term ends. Bolster has also been appointed one of 40 Fulbright Distinguished Chairs and will spend the 2002-2003 academic year as the Odense Chair in American Studies at the University of Southern Denmark in Odense. He will give his inaugural address as the Hayes Chair in September 2003.

The James H. Hayes and Claire Short Hayes Chair in the Humanities was endowed a decade ago by the Hayes family to promote the study of New Hampshire's history, culture and politics. It is one of two endowed chairs in the College of Liberal Arts. The generosity and vision of the Hayes family allows a professor the time and financial support to research and then share New Hampshire's history, leaving a legacy that extends far beyond the Granite State.

While he is in Denmark, Bolster will be teaching American Studies at Odense, but he will also be affiliated with the Center for Regional and Maritime History in Esbjerg, another branch of the University of Southern Denmark. This will provide him with the chance to compare his recent work looking at the past, present and future of the Piscataqua Estuary with similar work in Denmark. In addition, he will continue work on an environmental history of commercial fisheries in the North Atlantic.

In his absence, Judith Moyer, a research assistant

professor in the Center for the Humanities, will teach the New Hampshire history course and Karen Alexander, one of Bolster's graduate students, will coordinate a speaker's series based on "Cross-Grained and Wily Waters," a book on the Piscataqua Maritime Region edited by Bolster that will be released later this spring.

Bolster says the Hayes appointment will provide some resources to continue work on the creation of an American Studies major at UNH, with emphasis on regional studies.

"The academy as a whole, at least in the humanities, has something of a bias against local studies done by local people," Bolster says, "but this area is rich with content. We believe that scholars can work in their own disciplines and make serious contributions by studying in their immediate locale."

Bolster, who has been at UNH for 10 years, teaches courses in early American social and cultural history, New Hampshire history, African-American history, Caribbean history, and maritime history. He is the author of "Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail" and co-author of "Soldiers, Sailors, Slaves, and Ships: The Civil War Photographs of Henry P. Moore." He says he will begin research on the environmental history of the Gulf of Maine when he returns from Denmark because "too much history has been produced without attention to ecology, and too much ecology without reference to history. The disciplines are entwined, and they need each other to tell the full story."

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